

The City of Valdosta stands to receive up to \$713,000 in non-competitive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding in FY 2004, now that HUD has cleared an administrative rule eliminating a barrier to this money, Congressman Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. announced.

The Second District Congressman, a member of the Subcommittee on VA-HUD Appropriations, said the HUD rule clarifying the eligibility of newly defined “principal cities” for CDBG entitlement community funding should become effective in early January 2004.

“Achieving Entitlement Community status is an important step for Valdosta. I would like to commend the staff of the Community Development Department for their substantial progress in developing a Consolidated Plan to guide spending of these funds,” Representative Bishop said. “We’re pleased to have helped clear one administrative hurdle delaying the flow of these funds to address real community needs.”

“Upon learning of Metropolitan designation, our city was surprised to find that a technical issue might prevent us from receiving Entitlement funds. Through the effort of Congressman Bishop and his staff, working with HUD, this is now being corrected” stated Larry Hanson, City Manager of Valdosta. “An interim ruled has been forwarded to Capital Hill and the final approval of this rule will complete our effort to receive entitlement funds from HUD. These funds are critical to our ongoing community development and neighborhood revitalization efforts. We are extremely grateful to Congressman Bishop and his staff for the leadership they have provided in support of this effort, said Hanson.”

Across the country, a total of 81 new entitlement communities are impacted by the publication and expected implementation of this rule. Valdosta leads Georgia’s six new entitlement communities, with an anticipated formula amount of \$713,000. Brunswick, Dalton, Gainesville, Hinesville and Rome will also receive CDBG entitlement funding for the first time, resulting in an overall increase of \$3,183,000 for the state.